

REMARKS

Claims 18-46 are pending in the application. Claim 31 has been cancelled.

Claims 18-23, were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by USP 6,854,897 to Furumai et al. (hereinafter "Furumai"). Claims 29-30 were rejected under 35 USC 103 (a) as being obvious over Furumai.

Applicants acknowledge the examiner's courtesy in granting a personal interview with the undersigned attorney, Nitin Kaushik and by telephone with Laszlo Takacs on November 30, 2006. Applicants concur with the examiner's Interview Summary of November 30, 2006, in which the examiner deemed the present amendment to Claim 18 to distinguish that claim over the prior art. As such, dependent Claims 19-34 and 37-46 also distinguish over the prior art.

Further, Applicants point out that dependent claims deriving their dependency from Claim 18 recite additional features of the invention so as to distinguish over the prior art with more force than Claim 18. For instance, Claim 21 recites that, "the rod hub and the light pipe hub are so arranged as to cause the confronting faces of the light pipe end and the light-collection rod [are] sufficiently close to each other that faces wet themselves to each other to form a singular interface between the two faces." This is only possible when the confronting faces are in physical contact with each other and when at least one of the confronting faces is deformable (such as a typical plastic or polymer core of a light pipe) or a deformable material such as refractive index-matching fluid is interposed between the confronting faces. Current Fig. 6f shows positioning of a light pipe 52a and rod 72a, which contact each other at interface 110 as recited in Claim 21.

In contrast to Claim 21, the Furumai device lacks the features of Claim 21. In Furumai, the optical light guide 80 receives the unnumbered optical fiber in Fig. 3 of Furumai. This unnumbered light pipe is juxtaposed against optical fiber 64, shown in Fig. 4A of Furumai. Furumai fails to teach or suggest placement of the confronting faces of the mentioned unnumbered light pipe and optical fiber 64 in contact with each other, and further fails to teach or suggest making at least one of the confronting faces deformable or the interposition of a refractive index-matching fluid between the faces. Lacking the foregoing conditions, the Furumai device lacks the wetting feature of Claim

21. A person of ordinary skill in the art would thus not find Claim 21 obvious over Furumai.

Moreover, Claim 22 recites the feature for the shape of inter-fitting surfaces of the socket and plug to avoid mismatch of rod and the light pipe. As can be appreciated from Figs. 10b-10e, by shaping the socket and the plug non-cylindrically, the unwanted rod and light pipe mismatches are prevented. The non-cylindrical shape of the rod and the light pipe is shown in the aforementioned figures. On the other hand, Furumai discloses the plug 80 (Fig. 3) and socket 12 (Fig. 1) having cylindrical surfaces, thereby failing to disclose the elements of Claim 22.

Furthermore, Claims 29 and 30 recite that the light pipe hub and plug are made of plastic and metal, respectively. The specification discusses the different thermal considerations where the light pipe hub is made of plastic, and where the plug is made of metal. Specification at page 12, lines 28-32, and page 13, lines 1-28. Applicants submit that such thermal considerations would not be routine to a person with ordinary skill in the art.

In conclusion, the pending claims should be allowed.

I certify that the foregoing document and any document(s) referenced below are being filed electronically with the USPTO using the private PAIR system on the date stated below.

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Respectfully submitted,



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